YARRA CITY COUNCIL AND NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSES
PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2018-2021
This partnership strategy was formulated by Yarra Neighbourhood Houses and representatives of Yarra City Council. It provides a partnership approach to addressing identified needs in the community. By working collaboratively, all parties can draw on each other’s strengths and leverage resources.

Yarra is home to 89,710 people. About 19% of Yarra residents were born in non-English speaking countries and 23% speak a language other than English at home. The municipality is undergoing rapid change with many new housing developments and the population is expected to grow by 30% over the next 20 years.

The Yarra Neighbourhood Houses and Yarra City Council have a mutual goal to engage with the Yarra community in determining the provision of equitable recreational, social, vocational training, environmental and other health and well-being opportunities. In order to work in a truly collaborative manner Yarra City Council and Yarra Neighbourhood Houses signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). A key element of the MOU is the Annual Action Plan. Yarra City Council and Yarra Neighbourhood Houses have developed this Action Plan based on the objectives in the Council Plan 2017 – 2021. Priorities for collaborative work were identified together and actions were developed.

The Annual Action Plan will be reviewed annually to maintain responsiveness and flexibility.

**Vision**

Council and Neighbourhood Houses collaborating with trust and respect to foster a cohesive, resilient, empowered and engaged community.
YARRA NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSES

Alphington Community Centre
2 Kelvin Road, Alphington
9499 7227
alphingtoncommunitycentre.org.au

Belgium Avenue Neighbourhood House
9 Belgium Avenue, Richmond
9428 1676
banh.org.au

Carlton Neighbourhood Learning Centre
20 Princes Street, Carlton North
9347 2739
cnlc.org.au

Collingwood Neighbourhood House
Ground floor, Block 253
Hoddle Street, Collingwood
9417 4856
banh.org.au

Finbar Neighbourhood House
143 Kent Street, Richmond
9428 7668
finbar.org.au

Fitzroy Learning Network
198 Napier Street, Fitzroy
9417 2897
fln.org.au

Holden Street Neighbourhood House
128 Holden Street, North Fitzroy
9489 9929
holdenstreet.org.au

North Carlton Railway Neighbourhood House
20 Solly Avenue, Princes Hill
9380 6654
railwayneighbourhoodhouse.org.au

Richmond Community Learning Centre
15 Barnett Way, Richmond
9428 9901
rclc.org.au

VISION

COUNCIL AND NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSES COLLABORATING WITH TRUST AND RESPECT TO FOSTER A COHESIVE, RESILIENT, EMPOWERED AND ENGAGED COMMUNITY.
The following mechanisms are in place to support the partnership to achieve its vision:

• Memorandum of Understanding
• Neighbourhood House Funding Program
• Annual planning day with Yarra City Council and Neighbourhood Houses
• Monthly meetings of the Yarra Neighbourhood House Network

Four of the strategic objectives of the Council Plan 2017 – 2021 were chosen as a focus for the Council and Neighbourhood House Partnership Strategy. These objectives are:

• A healthy Yarra: Community health, safety and well-being are a focus in everything we do;
• An inclusive Yarra: Inclusion diversity and uniqueness are welcomed respected and celebrated;
• A sustainable Yarra: Council leads on sustainability and protects and enhances its natural environment; and
• A prosperous Yarra: Local businesses prosper and creative and knowledge industries thrive.
1. A healthy Yarra: Community Health, Safety and Well-being

Community well-being is the combination of social, economic, environmental, cultural and political conditions that enable people to flourish and fulfil their potential.

Neighbourhood Houses provide opportunities to connect people across cultural and socio-economic divides thus building bridges between diverse groups. However, there is scope to expand the reach of Neighbourhood Houses. This can be achieved by reviewing activities and events that Neighbourhood Houses already run and plan ways to increase participation from diverse groups.

2. An inclusive Yarra: Inclusion, diversity and uniqueness are welcomed, respected and celebrated

Creating a safe place where people of all ages, genders, sexualities, abilities, cultures and backgrounds feel welcome and connected is a priority for Council.

Neighbourhood Houses already make a significant contribution to this objective of the Council Plan through:

- Gathering spaces
- Cultural groups
- Food sharing
- Social enterprise development
- Mentoring
- Accessible education programs
- Family violence/ elder abuse awareness campaigns
- Celebrations and events that foster cultural exchange
- Provision of safe spaces

3. A sustainable Yarra: Council leads on sustainability and protects and enhances its natural environment

Protecting our natural environment and supporting our community to reduce its environmental footprint will continue to be a priority for Council.

Neighbourhood Houses actively promote sustainability through a range of programs and activities. Some Neighbourhood Houses are also demonstration houses showcasing strategies to improve energy efficiency. There are opportunities for Neighbourhood Houses to build on their role in sustainability leadership.

4. A prosperous Yarra: Local businesses prosper and creative and knowledge industries thrive

Supporting local businesses and creative industries not only contributes to Yarra’s economy, but also increases employment opportunities, enhances street life and fosters community connectedness.

Many Neighbourhood House participants are looking for work and employment opportunities. By working closer with the Economic Development Unit at Council there is potential to develop a range of employment pathways and business development opportunities.
### 1. A Healthy Yarra: Community Health, Safety and Well-being

Community well-being is the combination of social, economic, environmental, cultural and political conditions that enable people to flourish and fulfil their potential.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Who</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Outcomes/Outputs</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood House Programs</td>
<td>1.1 Neighbourhood Houses to learn about Results Based Accountability and Collective Impact Framework</td>
<td>Cheryle Grey</td>
<td>existing</td>
<td>Increased awareness of how success can be measured</td>
<td>March 2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnerships</td>
<td>1.2 Neighbourhood Houses and Yarra Libraries to work together to build and strengthen relationships and increase collaborative activities</td>
<td>All Neighbourhood Houses and Yarra Libraries</td>
<td>existing</td>
<td>Yarra Library staff member to attend Yarra Neighbourhood Houses Network meetings One person from a Neighbourhood Houses to go on library advisory committee One shared activity per year with each Neighbourhood Houses Finbar – Urban Filed Day Fitzroy Learning Network – Harmony Day 23 March Richmond Community Learning Centre – Community Connections Day at Richmond Holden Street – Movies in the Park Alphington Community Centre – Book bike and story time</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
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<td>Consultations</td>
<td>Neighbourhood Houses to participate in the consultation process for the development of Council’s key strategies e.g. volunteering, open spaces, urban agriculture</td>
<td>Community Planner to inform Network of consultations by Council</td>
<td>existing</td>
<td>Neighbourhood Houses are represented in all relevant Council consultations</td>
<td>2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open Spaces</td>
<td>Council to work with Neighbourhood Houses to activate small scale, under-utilised open spaces to foster opportunities for local connection</td>
<td>All Neighbourhood Houses Council Open Space Unit</td>
<td>existing</td>
<td>Neighbourhood Houses to identify spaces and feedback to Council Open Spaces department</td>
<td>2018</td>
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</table>
## 2. AN INCLUSIVE Yarra: Inclusion, Diversity and Uniqueness are Welcomed, Respected and Celebrated

Creating a safe place where people of all ages, genders, sexualities, abilities, cultures and backgrounds feel welcome and connected is a priority for Council.

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| Gathering spaces/celebrations 2.1 | Neighbourhood Houses and Council to actively collaborate in support, promotion and delivery of ongoing celebrations and festivals e.g. Harvest Festival, Harmony Day, Sustainability Week, fetes | All Neighbourhood Houses and Council | existing | Bringing people together  
Strengthening community connections  
Breaking down barriers that isolate people | 2018 |
| Skills Developing/Skills Harnessing 2.2 | Neighbourhood Houses and Council to partner in an annual Neighbourhood House Network event e.g. Music from the Heart and identify opportunities to build on the success of past events | All Neighbourhood Houses Council | existing | A happy and inclusive event that celebrates all that the Yarra Houses can achieve | 2018 |
| Safe Spaces 2.4 | Identify professional development for Neighbourhood Houses staff and volunteers on how to listen and provide information about what is available in the community.  
Explore options for Council to support professional development for example: Mental Health First Aid training, Common Risk Assessment Framework. e.g. Link in with Council’s Skills Training, Women’s Health in the North or other networks | All Neighbourhood Houses | existing | One person from each Neighbourhood House to have attended Identifying Family Violence training through Northern Integrated Family Violence Services | 2018 |
## 3. A Sustainable Yarra: Council Leads on Sustainability and Protects and Enhances its Natural Environment

Protecting our natural environment and supporting our community to reduce its environmental footprint will continue to be a priority for Council.

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| Information and education| 3.1 Neighbourhood Houses to generate list and description of all sustainability activities and share with sustainability officers at Council – include information about demonstration sites e.g. low water use gardens and learning clubs and best practice compost | All Neighbourhood Houses  
Council Sustainability Unit | existing | Improved sharing of information  
More people will find out about what is available | 2018     |
|                          | 3.2 Council’s Living Sustainably pages to link to Neighbourhood House sustainability initiatives and programs | Council Communications Unit  
All Neighbourhood Houses | existing | Improved sharing of information  
More people will find out about what is available | 2018     |
| Reduce waste to landfill | 3.3 Neighbourhood Houses to participate in the consultation process for the development of Council’s key strategies e.g. volunteering, open spaces, urban agriculture | All Neighbourhood Houses and Sustainability Unit | existing | Reduction in waste going to landfill  
More people delivering the message around reducing waste | 2018     |
|                          | 3.4 Council to work with Neighbourhood Houses to activate small scale, under-utilised open spaces to foster opportunities for local connection | Council Waste Management Unit  
All Neighbourhood Houses | existing | Reduction in waste going to landfill  
More people delivering the message around reducing waste | 2018     |
| Facilitate Urban Agriculture | 3.5 Continue to strengthen the relationship between Neighbourhood Houses and Urban Agriculture at Council and explore urban agriculture initiatives e.g. community orchard, fruit squad, food swap, seed swap | Sustainability Unit and all Neighbourhood Houses | existing | Increased community connection  
Increased awareness around food production in an urban context  
Greater collaboration between community groups | 2018     |
4. A PROSPEROUS YARRA: LOCAL BUSINESSES PROSPER AND CREATIVE AND KNOWLEDGE INDUSTRIES THRIVE

Supporting local businesses and creative industries not only contributes to Yarra’s economy, but also increases employment opportunities, enhances street life and fosters community connectedness.

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<td>Employment pathways, micro business and social enterprises for economically disadvantaged</td>
<td>4.1 Meet with Economic Development Unit from Council to understand what services they provide, and how Neighbourhood House participants can access these resources and services. Explore the potential for partnership opportunities e.g. Neighbourhood Houses to promote or host Council’s Lunchbox Learning series of seminars</td>
<td>Economic Development Unit Neighbourhood Houses Network</td>
<td>existing</td>
<td>Increased understanding by the Neighbourhood Houses of the services provided by Council’s Economic Development Unit</td>
<td>April 2018</td>
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